

Along Deserted Avenues by PuddingsWithProblems

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Summary:

Billy was just trying to get to his car he didn't exactly plan to play knight in shining armour to a 12 year old.

Along Deserted Avenues

Author's Note:

This is my first fic for the Stranger Things fandom so hopefully I get the characterisation correct.

Billy sees the kids as he's walking towards his car, school let out about half an hour ago and the parking lot is relatively empty...to be honest he would have missed them if he wasn't already looking in that direction. But he was looking, so he saw as two brats pushed around another much smaller brat. Their school yard beat down partially hidden by an old storage shed.

He was going to keep walking, he really was. It wasn't his business and he didn't exactly make it a habit to go around protecting middle schoolers. However, he paused when what the brats were saying drifted over to his ears.

It was slightly hard to understand their words but, 'zombie boy' and 'faggot' were among them. What stopped him though was that the smaller kid's face was already bruised and beaten. Flashes, gone before he could fully grasp the images, of him as a child patching himself up in the bathroom on lonely nights. And fuck, the kid just made eye contact with him, and even he wasn't enough of an ass-hole to ignore a fucking 12-year-old who had just bloody seen him get the shit beat out of them.

Huffing he changed course and took a long drag from his cigarette swaggering up to the kids who were half hidden by the dilapidated shed.

"Oi what the fuck are you brats doing?" he growled around his cigarette, stopping in front of the group.

Startled by the new figure the two kids who had previously been holding up the shorter one dropped him, stumbling back with comically wide eyes. like toddlers with their hand in the cookie jar.

After opening and closing their mouths for a couple of moments one of them must have pulled confidence from somewhere as he stepped

forward with his head up, an ugly sneer on his lips, “we were just teaching zombie boy to respect his betters.”, the little shit then proceeded to follow this up by spitting onto said 'zombie boy'.

“Exactly, it’s not like it matters anyway, who cares if we hit him he’s just a faggot!” His friend piped up from behind him with a snicker turning back towards the still downed kid as though the conversation was over – assuming that stranger wouldn’t care anymore now that he knew the brat was a ‘fag’.

Giving the two of them a withering look that they couldn’t see he took loud step forward pulling hi body up to it’s full height taking a long drag from his cigarette and blowing it in the kid’s direction smirking with vindictive glee when their faces screwed up from the smell. Clicking his tongue, he took another step forward letting his larger bulk loom over the brats as his lips curl up threateningly.

“See that’s where we have a problem; I don’t really like it when people, especially brats like you, decided to beat up kids who don’t deserve it,” stepping foward again hed crowded the two kids back against the wall of the shed. He didn’t even try to hide the malicious glee shining in his eyes at the fear the two kids showed from being cornered like rats before continuing. “So unless you have a legitimate reason for beating up this kid - which i honestly doubt you will because he looks like a strong wind will knock him over - then I’m gonna have to stop you, and you really don’t want that, trust me.”

For a minute he honestly thought the two were going to take a swing at him but one raised brow in the universal sign of 'I'm waiting' made the two brats go white as they processed the blatant threat. Took one last look at ‘zombie boy’ and sped away, heads low and avoiding eye contact as they passed Billy.

Looking over his shoulder as he watched the two kids run away he sighed before turning back to the other brat who still hadn’t moved or said a word.

Moving closer to the kid he crouched down to get a better look at him, trying to see what damage the brats had done.

The kid just kept his eyes down and it was quiet for a moment as billy moved his head this way and that to get a look at the grazes. Eventually the silence was broken when the kid. and god if he has to

refer to him as kid in his head one more time. opened his mouth and quietly said “they were right you know.”

Billy peered into the kid’s eyes before letting his mouth curl down into a frown, he didn’t like where this was going and showed his displeasure by lighting another cigarette “right about what kid?”

“That I’m a faggot and that I’m weird” he said, his eyes welling up with tears and his shoulders trembling. He was shaking with sobs, curled up on the ground, and covering his face with his hands, trying to stop the older teen from seeing his face.

Letting out a quiet “shit,” Billy dropped the cigarette and crushed it on the ground next to him. Looking around he saw that the carpark was entirely empty now and that it was starting to get dark. Fuckfuckfuck, crying kids were not something he was good at.

Giving a groan as he stood up from the crouch he let his hand fall into the kid’s line of sight. “Come on kid. Let’s just get you home and when we do we’ll patch you up.”

The kid flinched back before nervously dropping his hands from his face and glancing up at Billy. He looked back at the hand and shyly took it, letting the teenager pull him up from the ground and pick up his discarded school bag.

As they walked over to the last car in parking lot he looked back down at the kid curiously when he felt him tap his arm.

“What do you want brat,” he said gruffly pulling out another cigarette from his pocket.

The kid shuffled his feet as they reached the car and got in before quietly saying “Will. My name’s Will. And um, thank you. For stopping those guys.”

Looking a bit startled Billy peered down at the kid again before huffing out smoke “Billy, and don’t worry about it kid. Like I told those other brats I don’t like seeing people beat up those who don’t deserve it.” Pausing he turned the car on before looking back at Will, “and trust me, you definitely look like you didn’t deserve it.”

Will let out a shaky laugh as he rubbed away the tears from cheeks, “Thank you, not many people like me anymore. I’m too weird. The

resident 'zombie boy' and all that”

Sighing again Billy shut his eyes as he exhaled his cigarette smoke before turning back to the kid, “Kid, middle schoolers are vicious little fucks, and I sure as hell don’t care if you’re gay. Just, just don’t call yourself that word, god knows you’ll get called it enough in your life.”

Rubbing his hands over his face again as he remembered all the times Neil had beat that word into him, screamed it till it rung in his ears, Billy started the car and turned his music on, letting the song blast over the speaker before looking at the kid and trying not to wince at how much the bruises were swelling, “ok you little shit which way is your house?”

The rest of the drive passed mostly without words bar Will’s quiet directions and Billy’s music blaring. Oddly it was peaceful.

Before long he was pulling up to the Byers house, helping Will out of the car as his adrenaline wore off and exhaustion replaced it. He practically carried all the kids weight as he limped up to the front door and knocked. He had barely even taken a step back before it was opened by a frantic Joyce Byers.

As she took stock of her sons bruised face and the large teenager helping him her hands flew to her mouth and she quickly ushered them in, leading the two to the bathroom where Billy gently placed will onto the bath ledge as Joyce appeared with the first-aid kit.

Billy moved back feeling awkward and unsure in the face of the protectiveness this mother was so obviously displaying, not sure if he should leave or stay. Fortunately, his questions were answered when Joyce turned to him. Caught much like a deer in headlights he stood still as Joyce looked him up and down. taking in everything from his long hair, his earring to his roughed up clothes.

Apparently deciding he was ok she turned back to her work of fixing the injuries on her son with an ease that spoke of practice

“Thank you for bringing him home, I know he gets bullied but every time I bring it up with the school they say that they’ll ‘fix it’. They

never do and he keeps coming home like this,” her face was twisted with anguish at the situation and Billy felt even more out of place. He wasn’t used to the clear love this woman felt for her son. the obvious care and affection was foreign and an ugly feeling of jealousy rose up. He felt his stomach churn as he was forced to realise, yet again, that he hadn't had someone in his life like that for a long time.

“Uh...it's ok, I was walking by and saw them. no one else had seen and he looked like he needed some help” He said the words jerky and unsure in the face of such genuine appreciation. As he started to back up ready to take his leave a voice stopped him.

Turning back around he found himself once again making contact with Will’s haunting eyes, they seemed far too old for a face as young as his, and he couldn’t help but wonder if this is how people felt when they looked into his eyes as well.

“Thank you for helping me Billy. And don’t worry, I won’t tell people about your secret,” Will’s mouth inched up into a small smile, the small gesture pulling at the scabs on his cheeks.

For a second he felt as though the rug had been pulled out from underneath him. This tiny, Bambi looking 13 year old knew. figured it out from what? a 30 minute drive not even 5 minutes if conversation.

Despite himself he could feel his lips pull up into a smile, his lips twisting around the cigarette still between his lips. He shook his head before turning back towards the door, “Yeah, thanks for that kid, hopefully we don’t meet again under the same circumstances.” With that he left the doorway and started to make his way back to the front door.

He'd made it all the way to his car, the door was open and he was so close to being in the clear but again a voice stopped him

“Wait!” Joyce’s voice rung out, he looked back and she was running down the steps towards him “you don’t have to leave yet. How about you stay for dinner as a thank you for what you did for will?” she said, her eyes conveying the sincerity behind the offer as she wrung her hands in her shirt. If they were trembling slightly he didn't

mention it

Standing there with his car door half open Billy faced the woman and let a slight genuine smile slip onto his face, "thank you for the offer ma'am but I really have to get home" Joyce nodded as though she was expecting that and took a step back to let him know he was free to go

With another nod of his head and bent down into his vehicle, turned it on and drove back up the way he came. In his rear view he could see that she was standing on the porch waving. Despite how insignificant the gesture was he couldn't help but let the small warm feeling unfurl in his chest

As he drove home he didn't feel too bad about the fact that he was going to be in deep shit for being late if it meant he'd helped the kid.